

The background of the magazine cover is a photograph of a two-story house with a grey roof and a prominent front porch with a dark arched door. The house is surrounded by lush green trees and a well-maintained lawn. A stone pillar with the address '902 UNIVERSITY DRIVE' is visible in the foreground on the right. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a pleasant summer day.

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SUMMER 2016

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A Garden in the Sky
31

Photo: Heather Fritz

Cover: A beloved 1926-era home gains a fresh face and more family room at the hands of its newest owners. Thoughtful planning and respect for heritage draws applause from the character-rich neighbourhood. Photo: Heather Fritz

HOME Front

Hat from Saskatoon's own
Sova Design Millinery.



Photo of Amanda Soulodre by Heather Fritz

Sprouts are sprouting, cabins are airing out, barbecues are revving up and a whole glorious summer stretches out ahead of us. Let's celebrate! In every issue, we look forward to showing off what makes our city so exceptional. Here's what's on offer inside.

When Chris and Jill Popplewell chose the 1926-era house at University Drive and 17th Street, it was selected for its charm. But the growing family needed more space. Sensitive to a character-filled neighbourhood, the couple opted for a solution that made everyone very happy (pg. 14).

Meet Emory Ann Kurysh, who always dreamed of a home built with 100 per cent reclaimed materials. Take a look at her Pike Lake house and learn about the challenges she faced (pg. 25). In a similar vein, Ashleigh Mattern introduces us to the Praski family. See how they embrace a 'green lifestyle' without feeling like they are giving up anything (pg. 42).

Speaking of green, Julie Barnes gives us a look at her own Nutana rooftop garden. With a little ingenuity, Julie takes full advantage of long daylight hours and this "topical" location for her succulents and bee-friendly plants (pg. 32).

A Richmond Heights couple has become pretty popular since they built a backyard theatre that draws friends and neighbours for movies and sports.

Depending on your budget and ambition, you can have one, too! (pg. 62)

If that isn't your thing, there are lots of other outdoor investments you can make to improve your property. A local landscape designer and realtor offer some advice about making the most of outdoor spaces to add value (pg. 8).

We may be the City of Bridges, but how much do we know about the water that runs through our city? See how our river water becomes those eight glasses we're supposed to drink every day (pg. 37).

Our foodie, Craig Silliphant, already has sights set on homemade garlic dill pickles to stock his pantry and, for a faster fix, sweet refrigerator pickles (pg. 50). And nothing screams 'summer!' like the sights and sounds of the annual Exhibition, an annual staple with humble beginnings in 1886 as an agricultural fair. Jeff O'Brien takes us on a ride through the history of Saskatoon's iconic Ex (pg. 56).

So hang on, dig in, enjoy summer and Saskatoon HOME!

Happy reading!

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READER PANEL

Thank you to our Summer Issue Reader Panel seen below. The people on the Reader Panel change every issue and are made up of fans of the magazine who volunteer to help us select our stories. Their input allows us to really delve into our readership and make sure we are selecting stories that people in and around Saskatoon look forward to reading each and every issue. Once story ideas are selected, we then assign them to our writers.



“I love reading HOME to see the innovative ways people design their homes.

Boris Rac

Financial Planner,
World Financial Group



“I love reading HOME because it helps me stay current on what is happening in our market.

Joseph Poth

Project Manager,
Poth Home Solutions



“I love reading HOME because I enjoy the local articles.

Kathy Diederichs

Administrator / Artist



“My favourite past article was on solar power. That'd be a great next project... after we fix our bathroom.

Liv Marken

Writing Centre Coordinator,
University of Saskatchewan



“I love reading HOME because I'm a bit nosey, so I love to have a peek inside renovated houses and yards and discover ways to repurpose my existing favourite items.

Maxine South

Retired



“I don't have a favourite type of article. I read every issue cover to cover; I don't play favourites.

Michelle Rowlett

Owner,
Interior Design Solutions

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 JULIE BARNES

PROJECTS WITH AN ROI

Investing in the Outdoors

Photo: Rocco Masons

Smart kitchen and bathroom renovations can earn a homeowner a return on investment (ROI) when it comes time to sell, but what about all fresco features? From creating distinctive curb appeal to designing a private, functional backyard, there are several ways to ensure your hard-earned dollars are well spent.

Creating a return on investment in the outdoors can be measured in terms of dollars, as well as reducing your sell time—which has an intrinsic value to you as a homeowner. Denise Balcaen, a local landscape designer and owner of Gardens Four Seasons, and Ron Baliski, a Saskatoon Realtor with The Associates Team, have

shared their top tips for adding value to your outdoor spaces.

Minimal Maintenance

If your outdoor landscaping looks easy to maintain, it adds a lot more value than a fussier yard, Denise says. “If I was going to increase the value of a house, I would make sure the plantings were very simple, yet

complement the house.” She adds that creating generous curves and edging them with mowing strips makes maintenance a breeze. Mowing strips can be positioned along any edge that meets the lawn, and can be made of bricks or man-made edges.

Ron echoes Denise’s call for low-maintenance landscaping.

"If it looks like it's going to be easy to maintain, it adds value. People don't want to walk in and do a bunch of work. That's really paramount in people's minds—how much work there is to do, and how much it will cost to repair or improve things."

Durable Decks and Fences

Low-maintenance materials are equally important because today's homebuyers often don't want to have to repaint or re-stain decks and fences. Vinyl and composite decking appeal to these buyers, as does vinyl fencing. "They're more expensive, but in the long run you don't have to do anything to them," says Ron.

Investing in low-maintenance products like this can be listed as a feature that will add to the value of your home.

Distinctive Driveways

Ron recommends that homeowners think beyond basic concrete when it comes to designing driveways. "We've got different driveways now—concrete's not the only standard anymore. A lot of people are doing a stamped concrete or pavers." Other attractive, long-lasting options include rubber sealed, rubber pavers, pigmented concrete and exposed aggregate.

Spacious Patios

"A trend with a lot of my clients is using a smaller deck right out the door into the backyard, and then having a larger patio you can spill out onto a step or two down," says Denise. Ideally, the deck would be big enough for a couple of chairs, a bistro table and barbecue, but the primary outdoor space is the lower, more spacious patio. She notes that a lot of homes with raised back decks lack privacy, so adding a ground-

level patio creates more solitude than a raised deck where you are more on display to your neighbours. "If you're wanting to just pop outside by yourself with a cup of coffee, the top level is easy access. But when you're entertaining or have family visiting, you always have that extra roomy lower level to spill out into."

Outdoor Entertaining

The creation of backyard kitchens, outdoor theatre areas, and dramatic fireplaces are trends that are likely to last and increase in demand.

Whether you want to get grilling on a built-in barbecue, bake a pizza in a wood-fired oven, prep a salad with the help of an outdoor sink and countertop space, or keep your wine chilled in an accessible bar fridge, the sky's the limit when it comes to functional outdoor entertaining features.

But what is clear is that homebuyers want to extend their useable living space in the warmer months to accommodate both small and large gatherings.

When investing in outdoor entertaining elements for the purpose of creating an ROI, be aware that the more custom and specific you are, the smaller your potential audience. The most important element when adding these features is to think about flow and how to best create a space that is usable and proportional to the backyard.

Creating Privacy

Homeowners are often looking for privacy when enjoying their outdoor spaces, especially in the backyard. While fencing is often the quickest solution, Denise suggests homeowners consider distinctive privacy screens, trellises, ➤

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Decorative privacy screens not only help create privacy within a space, they can also add to your backyard aesthetic.

Photo: Remnant Steel

pergolas, and the thoughtful placement of quick-growing trees to create both privacy and shade.

"I'm just designing a yard right now where clients have a view looking out their

kitchen window directly into the neighbours' yard, so I'm planning Pyramid cedars in clusters of five, that will eventually provide them with pretty much a complete visual block year-round."

Aside from Pyramid cedars, Denise recommends Swedish aspen, Parkland Pillar birch and Skyrocket, Medora or Cologreen junipers for creating privacy.

Lush Lawns and Raised Beds

"I know a lot of people are trying to get away from lawns, but they're still very common," says Denise. "There's nothing that makes a yard look more well cared for or well valued than if a lawn is really lush and luxurious. It's a very decadent touch." A healthy lawn ultimately creates a great first impression for potential buyers, she says. "If the lawn looks good, then the rest of the yard is probably going to look good too."

Whether contained in stone or wood borders, beautiful raised beds will add visual interest and a return on your investment when they're built with care. The added height makes gardens easier to weed and maintain (perfect for fruit and vegetables), while going vertical also keeps more aggressive plants from spreading throughout your yard. ➤



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Photo: Fenced in Vinyl

Warm Welcome

First impressions count and set the tone for the rest of your home, says Ron. "Paint the front door so it welcomes the buyer. You want to make the exterior front entrance homey, bright and cheery—especially

here, where you don't have much summer." For the cost of a can of paint and some time, you can make a big impact.

Opening the front door is often the first tactile experience homebuyers will encounter. For that reason, the door

should be easy to open and everything from the handle to hinges should be in excellent condition. If your door has seen better days, consider replacing it with a new one that not only looks good, but also increases your home's energy efficiency. There are endless style options in an array of price points.

Denise adds that the area around the front door should be attractively landscaped to create a hospitable vibe. She often creates this atmosphere by adding low plantings near the entry. "You want to make sure that the front entry is visible and easily accessible, not covered with large trees or shrubs."

Consider All Four Seasons

We rarely have the convenience of choosing what season to sell our home, so it's important to plan outdoor spaces with all four seasons in mind.

"Because we have such a short summer, you want to be able to look out into your yard and see something that is either green year-round or has a nice shape in winter and looks stunning adorned with frost or snow. Possibly you could plan something for Spring bloom and then of course summer is a given—our yards should always look great then!" says Denise.

In order to cash in on that forethoughtful planning, make sure to take photos in every season to have on hand when it is time to sell so potential buyers can truly understand the investment. With these improvements, your home is more attractive to them, but you and your family have the added bonus of enjoying a more beautiful space before you decide to move on. 

Julie Barnes

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DOUBLE THE SPACE ALL THE CHARACTER

Seamless Addition on University Drive



Chris and Jill Popplewell had new house plans drawn up and a lot bought when they found out their second child was on the way. Opting for an “interim house” until the children were a little older, they put plans for a new build on hold. Already smitten with Nutana, the young couple checked out a quaint

1790-square foot 1926 character home poised to go on the market. Within minutes, they fell in love and not only won the bid, but ultimately the hearts of their neighbours.

“I always wanted to live in an older neighbourhood in a home that felt like waking up on Christmas morning,” says

Jill, an ICU nurse. “Cozy, warm, traditional.”

Touched by the welcome notes left in the mailbox, loving the University Drive corner lot, mature trees, proximity to the river, and walking distance to Jill’s work, they knew this was where they wanted to stay to raise their family.

This home was no longer just temporary. What the couple did next earned applause from the neighbourhood in this character-rich part of the city.

20th Century Meets Modern Wish List

The challenge was to get



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



HEATHER FRITZ

more space and modern creature comforts—upgraded mechanical (humidifier, an HRV and air conditioning), sprayfoam insulation, open kitchen and dining, mud room, bonus room, a coveted three-car garage for Chris, ensuite and walk-in closets. Accommodating all of this while retaining

the traditional style with its steep roof pitches and exterior aesthetic would be the trick.

“The house had good bones and newer windows. When a contractor says ‘Just bulldoze, it’ll be cheaper,’ I think that’s often a lazy response,” Chris insists. “What we ended up doing didn’t cost more ➤



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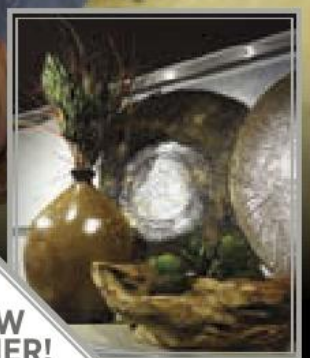


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1 SOUTH ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

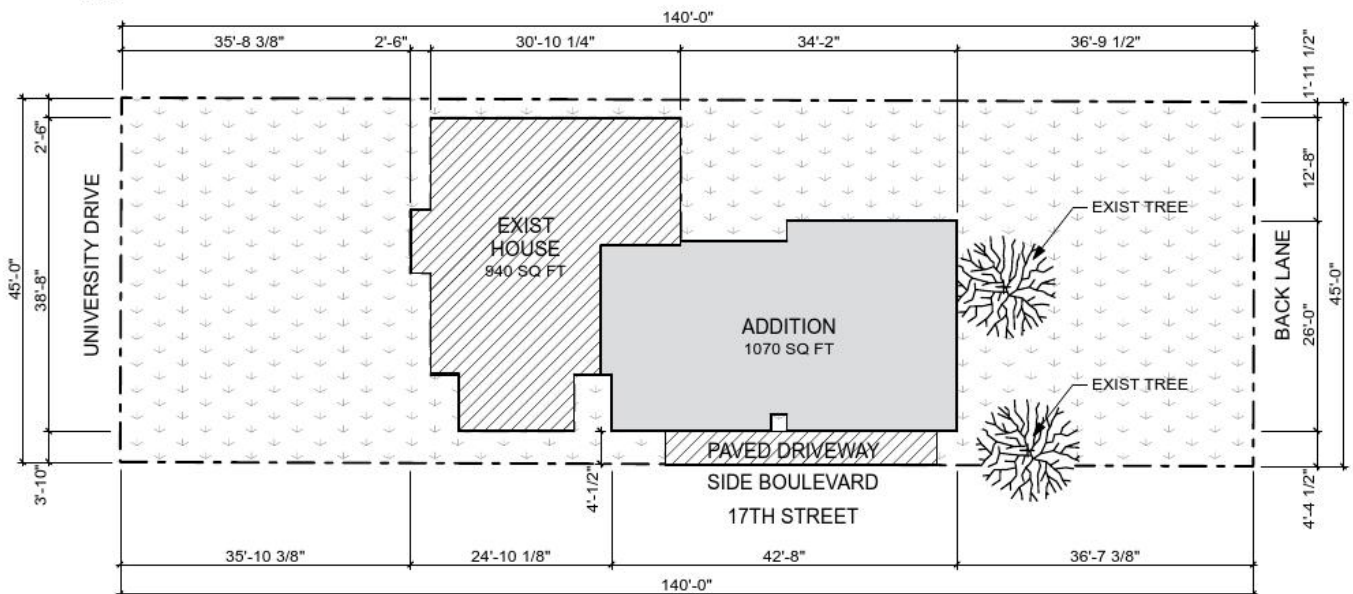


MATERIALS LEGEND

- A** ASPHALT SHINGLES - WEATHERED
- B** PREFIN METAL FASCIA - WHITE
- C** STUCCO - MATCH EXISTING
- D** METAL CLAD VINYL WINDOWS - WHITE
- E** WOOD RAILING - WHITE PT
- F** FIBREGLASS INSUL DOOR
- G** BRICK ACCENT

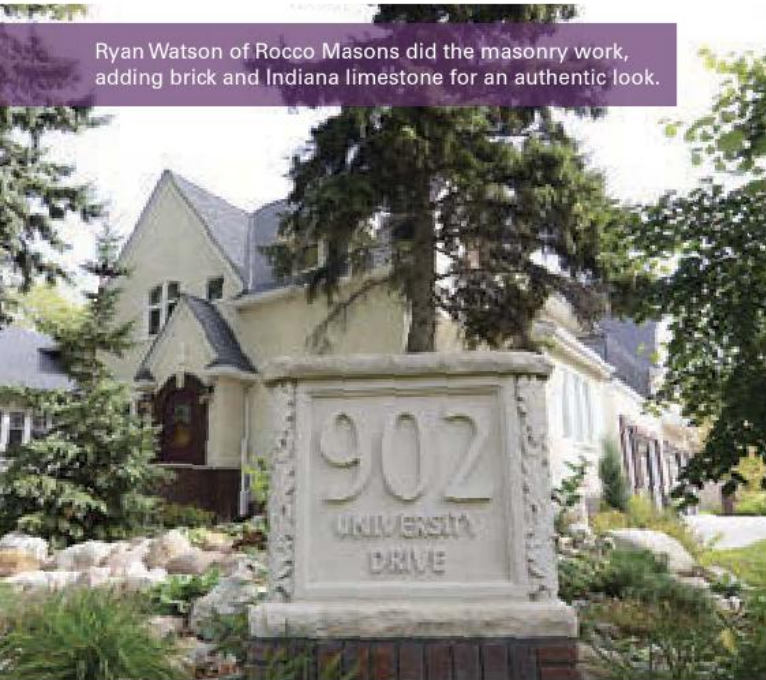
2 WEST ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Drawings: Crystal Bueckert, BLDG Studio

Ryan Watson of Rocco Masons did the masonry work, adding brick and Indiana limestone for an authentic look.



than a brand new build. But it would have been way easier to knock it down and build a 3,000-square foot home with a lot less thinking."

First Things First

The first step was to renovate the original 1,790 square feet and settle in before they tackled an addition. The last owners, Marshall and Mary Gilliland, bought in 1973 and the home had been meticulously maintained. Son Sean sold the home after his mother's death in 2010. But upgrades were needed. The rooms were small, but the potential for open concept was clear.

The old flooring came out, ceilings came down and walls were opened up. They pulled out the bathroom upstairs, and lath and plaster filled the dumpster. The summer of 2011 went by in demolition blur; Chris, Jill and son River moved in two weeks before daughter Mercy was born in October. During the winter, the couple worked on plans for the addition.

Mental Gymnastics

"We realize there are polarizing sentiments about the modern style and the traditional look. It was our personal preference to respect the era of the house, and blend with the character homes on this corner," Chris says.

Crystal Bueckert, an architectural technician, worked with them on the design concepts. Despite the steep pitches on the 1926-era house, Chris knew there must be a way to mirror that house at the back of the lot and connect the two spaces with roof pitches that matched.

"Because the house is situated on a corner lot with full exposure to three sides," Crystal notes, "each side was treated as a prominent façade when designing. We matched the roof pitch, eave and window details and finishes of the original house. By mimicking the original features with new materials, we were able to seamlessly blend the addition with the original building."

"There were some mental gymnastics involved," ➤

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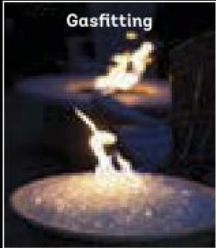
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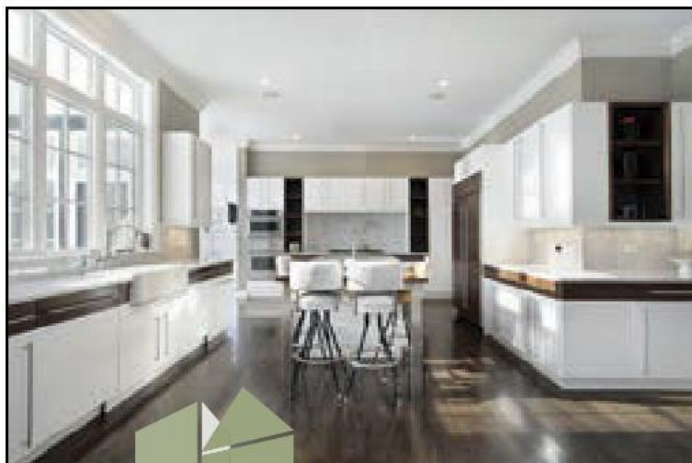


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A secluded alcove at the back of the addition is a perfect entertainment area.



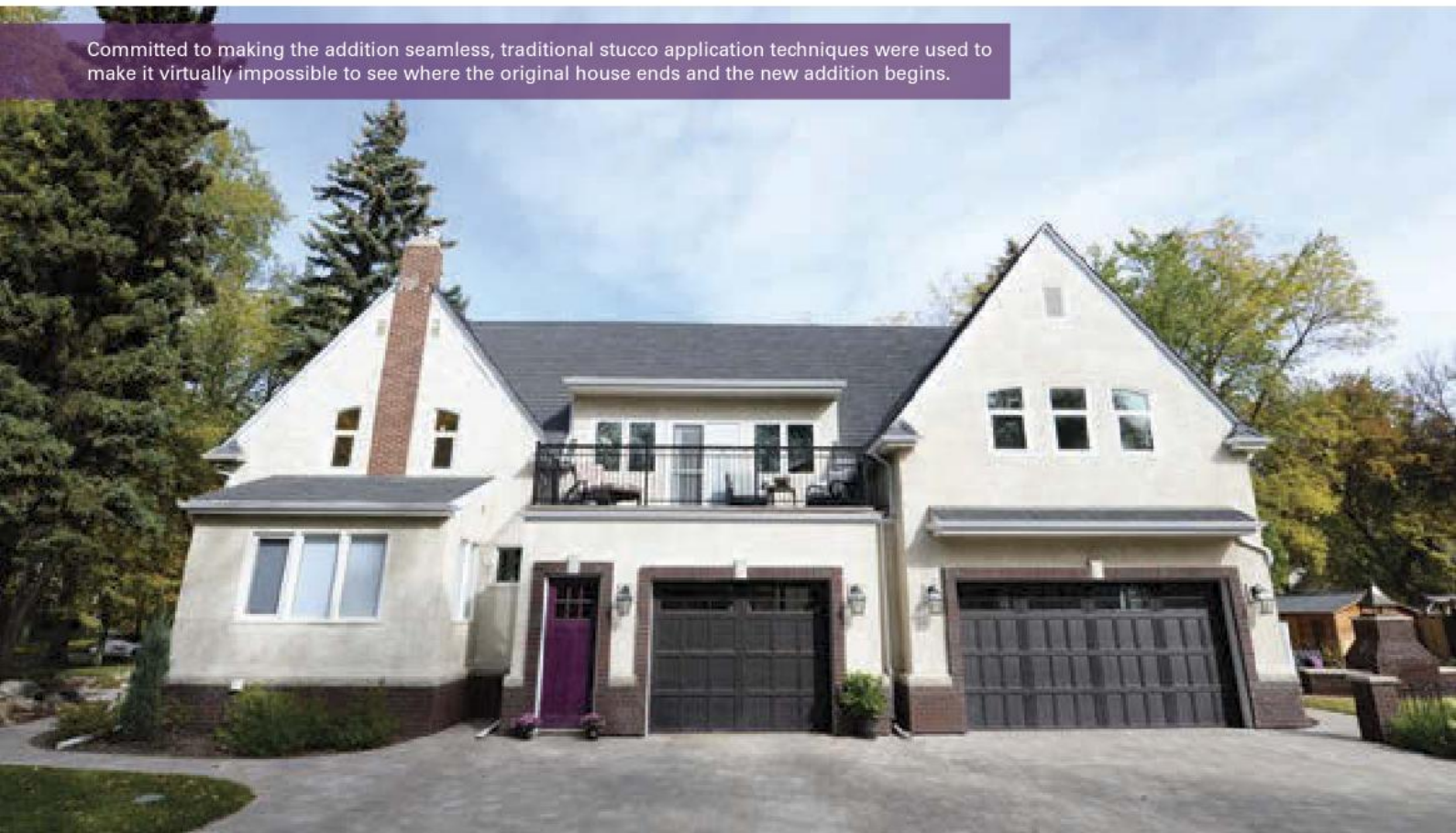
Chris laughs. "Crystal really captured what we wanted. The original house is 21 feet wide with 14/12 pitch, and the new section at the back with our master bedroom above the garage is the same, rotated 90 degrees."

Anything is Possible

"Whatever you want to do is almost always technically possible." Chris, owner of Strata Development, a construction management firm, had experience and a mechanical engineering background on his side.

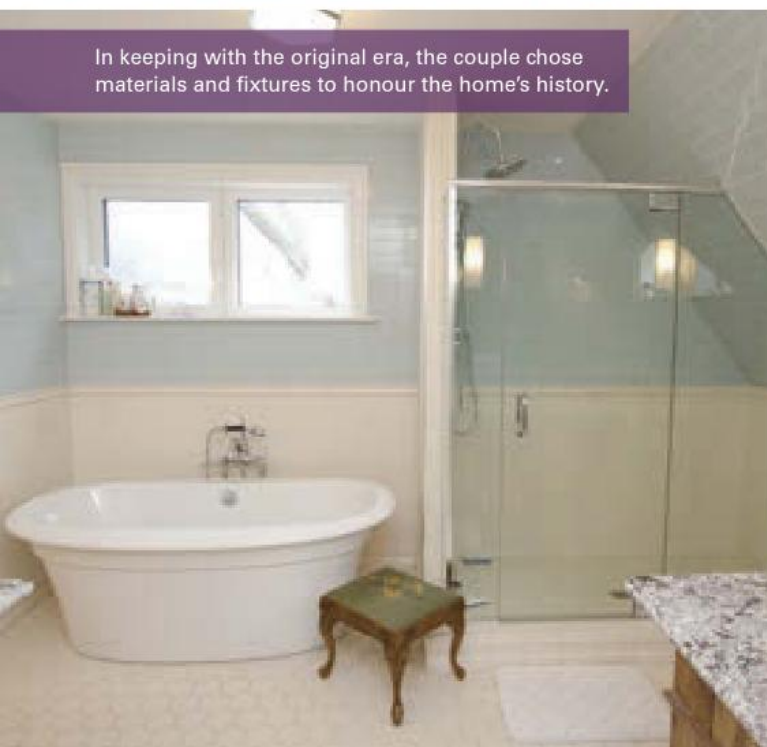
"It comes down to how much it will cost and how long it will take. We put people on the moon; we build skyscrapers. Construction challenges like this aren't nearly as complicated if you roll up the sleeves and get creative. When given all of the facts, some decide no; others ➤

Committed to making the addition seamless, traditional stucco application techniques were used to make it virtually impossible to see where the original house ends and the new addition begins.

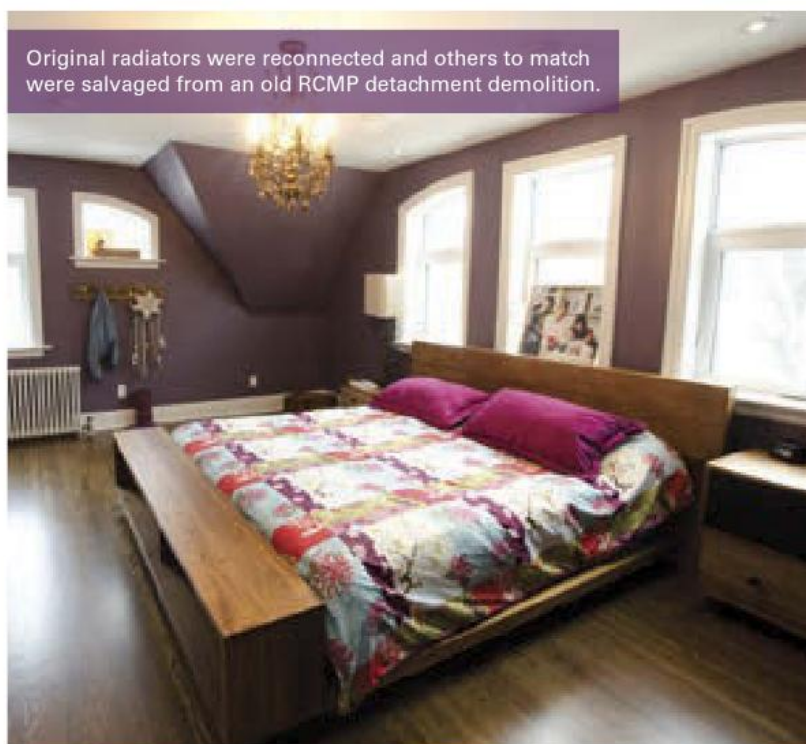




In keeping with the original era, the couple chose materials and fixtures to honour the home's history.



Original radiators were reconnected and others to match were salvaged from an old RCMP detachment demolition.



say yes, let's do it. In our case, we decided to do it."

With plans finalized, Chris was anxious to get the addition framed and closed in. "I thought if we could start the foundation work in July, we'd be opening up the roof of the house and tying the rooflines in by September. That's harvest season, usually the lowest risk of those thunderstorms that come cracking through at

11 pm with high winds," says Chris. "It was pretty complex and stressful, but the framer we hired was as aggressive as we were. As we discussed some of the unresolved challenges, he just said, 'Don't worry, it's just wood. We'll deal with it.' He had a lot of guts and a great attitude."

Honouring the History

Chris and Jill insisted that

The bonus room that connects the original house with the garage and master bedroom with ensuite provides more space for a growing family.



old and new interiors would blend and the exterior would be a seamless transition. The only “giveaway clue” on the outside was that there would have been no triple attached garage in 1926. “But stylistically—rooflines, brick, stucco, iron railing, curved windows, everything—it would be seamless.”

Chris knew how he wanted the vision to come together—

and that it could be done, despite doubters. Sub-trades soon got into the spirit of making it all look like the original.

“Once we explained that we couldn’t just pop over to Rona, that things had to be custom made and the template was the original house, people really got into it,” says Chris. The couple was thrilled to discover original doors, including a set

of French doors, and hardware like original glass doorknobs, stored in the basement and garage. The kitchen pantry barn door was once on the basement coal room, and even bears some ghostly coal-dust fingerprints, possibly from the 1920s.

By using the original house template, trades were able to replicate details like baseboards, casings, stair treads,

curved windows and apron sills. By scrounging other vintage items and finding sympathetic modern pieces, they successfully retained the authentic 1926 era feel even as they opened and expanded the space.

A Sticky Situation

No one was able to guarantee there wouldn’t be a noticeable difference ➤

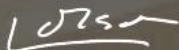
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Curtis Olson
Founder of Shift Development

SHIFT  DEVELOPMENT

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between old and new stucco, visually the most public part of the addition. Replacing all the old stucco wasn't in the budget.

"Back in the day it was a cement-based stucco and the application was called dashing. It was just globbed on with brushes to get that texture," Chris explains. Modern stucco is troweled on. But the veteran applicators he hired had worked in stucco for decades and understood traditional methods. They bought premixed stucco, added cement mix to stiffen it, then hand-dashed with horsehair brushes, blending perfectly.

"It was a risky experiment but there is no way anyone can tell where they joined old and new," Chris laughs. The framer's ability to tie in all those rooflines was impressive, but "right up there on

the gratitude scale are the old school stucco guys."

A Home Forever

Four years later, the family is dug into the community and loves their "new old" home. They've added on in other ways, too; River is now six. Mercy four, and Maverick is almost two.

"The biggest compliment comes from people who knew the Gillilands and say they would have loved this," says Jill. "I'm so glad we didn't just tear it down and build new. It feels good that we acted out of respect for not only the original house, but for all the people who called this their home."

Judging by the frequency of passersby who still stop to offer compliments, a lot of other people feel the same way. 

Karin Melberg Schwier

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A RECLAIMED JOURNEY

Building with Recycled Materials



  EMORY ANN KURYSH

When the idea to build our home first came to light, the goal was to make it look like a heritage barn conversion, primarily built from reclaimed materials. The benefits in doing so were vast and varied, not the least of which involved embracing our own creativity and challenging ourselves in the implementation of the design ideas.

Part of our motivation was driven by the knowledge that salvaging building materials cuts down on landfill waste and has an impact on the environment. Another factor is that the cost of recycled materials generally runs much lower than their newer counterparts, and reclaimed materials instantly add a sense of character that can't easily be accomplished

in new constructions.

Ours was not a journey of how a completely recycled home came to be, but rather a lesson learned on the reality of using secondhand building materials.

The Big Picture

In planning our home, the most dominant design feature was to make use of reclaimed

barn wood siding. But early into our build this became apparently difficult.

The first issue we ran into was that the lengths of the reclaimed boards were not long enough to run either horizontally or vertically without showing significant breaks. The second issue lay within the condition of the wood itself. It was extremely weathered, ➤

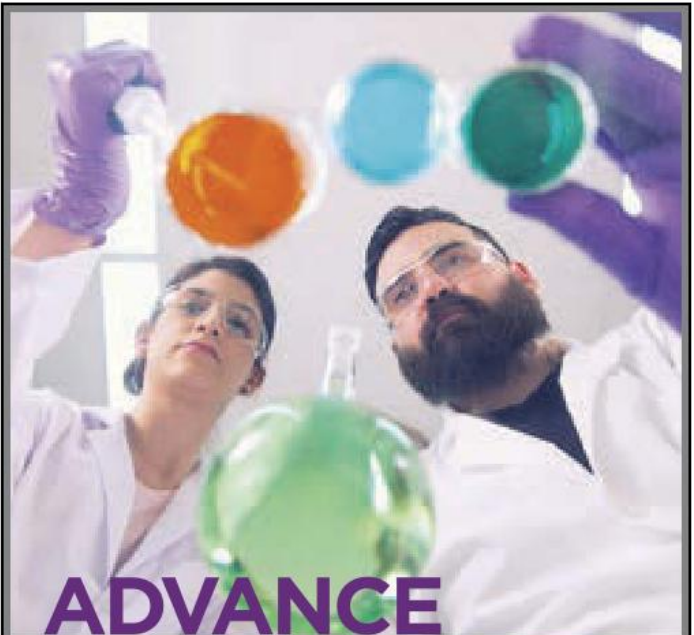
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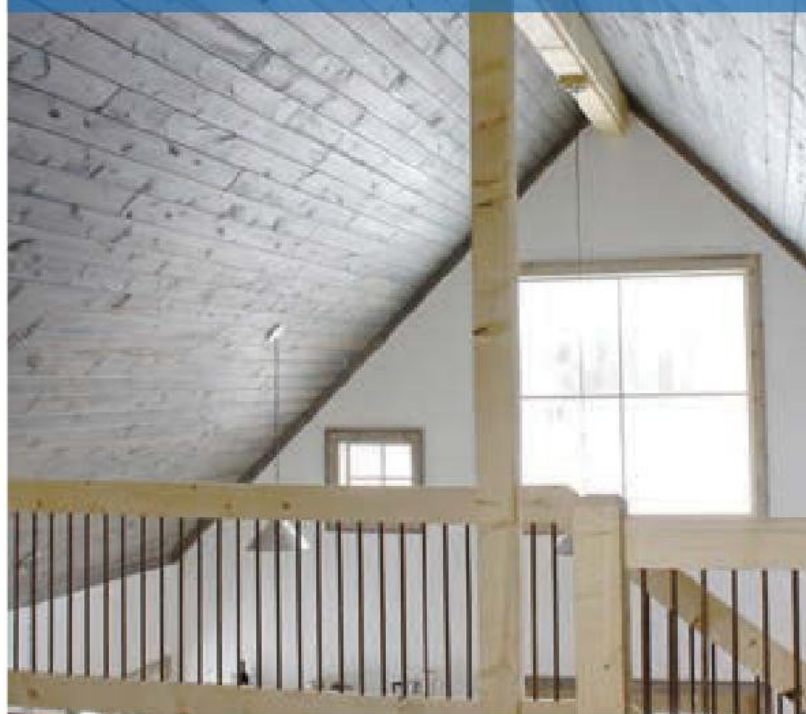
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With some deviation from the initial plan, the rough-cut beam and rebar staircase guardrail meets code and adds an authentically rustic look.



which was our initial draw to it, but would require significant work to prevent further deterioration on the exterior of the home. The fear was that over time it would be exposed to issues such as accelerated rot, infestation and warping.

So we had to create a new strategy to get us the look we envisioned, but with a new durable material.

The decision was reached to use untreated rough-cut pine in place of the barn wood. Although it wasn't originally in the plan and budget, this decision turned out to be the most aesthetically pleasing and soundest option.

Taking it Inside

The theme of recycled wood continued within the interior of the home. The handrail for the staircase was also to be constructed of barn wood. All of the balusters, guardrails and posts were to be fabricated from pine, running horizon-

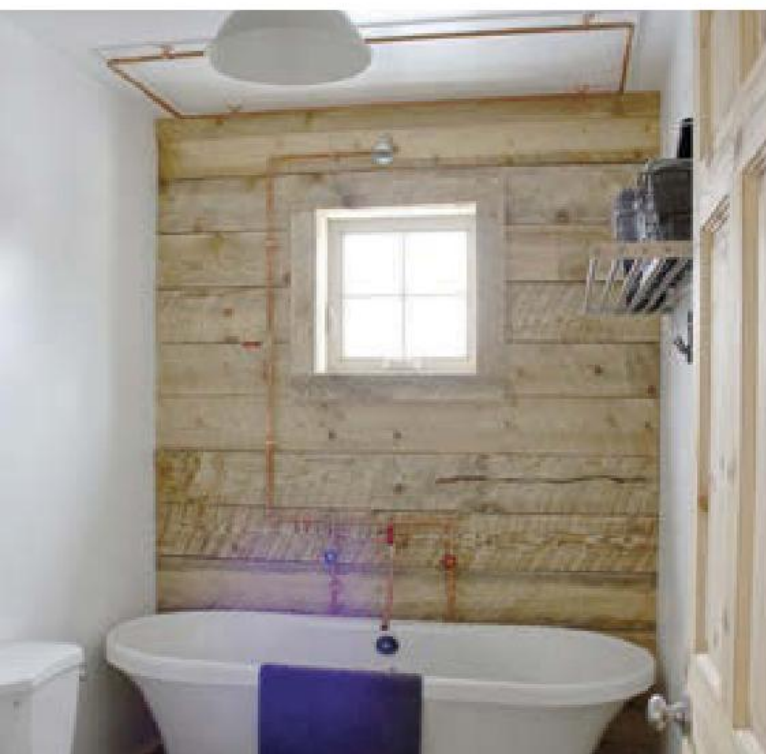
tally. But when we installed the staircase, we learned that it is against building code standards as the guardrail was deemed to be 'climbable'. So yet another major design plan was discarded.

The solution involved raw materials in the form of large, rough-cut beams and rebar. Again, this major alteration increased the budget. However, it provided a more stable handrail that was wholly unique and justly fitting for the overall look.

The ceiling was the third and final compromise in the use of reclaimed materials. The plan was for recycled metal roofing to be hung instead of drywall to reinforce the heritage barn concept. It would have saved on time, future maintenance and cost.

After conducting an extensive and unsuccessful search for a large quantity of reclaimed metal, the idea was scrapped.

It turned out this was ➤



The lower kitchen cabinets were given to the family by acreage owners who no longer wanted them. The couple installed them, then bought a countertop and used reclaimed wood for trim.



for the best. Research later revealed that a metal ceiling would more than likely have created poor acoustics and could have affected resale value. It was ultimately the contractor's suggestion to install a tongue and groove ceiling. A pine ceiling would not only be a quicker install than drywall, the wood would add strength and would be visually much more appealing.

Vintage Lighting

To stay true to the original design we were able to source vintage lighting for the exterior of the home. Five large, gooseneck, gas station lights were purchased from an online retail store dedicated to selling refurbished lighting.

We found this to be more fitting than using modern fixtures. We liked that they would be unique to the home and that it would cut down on landfill waste.

Repurposing the Reclaimed

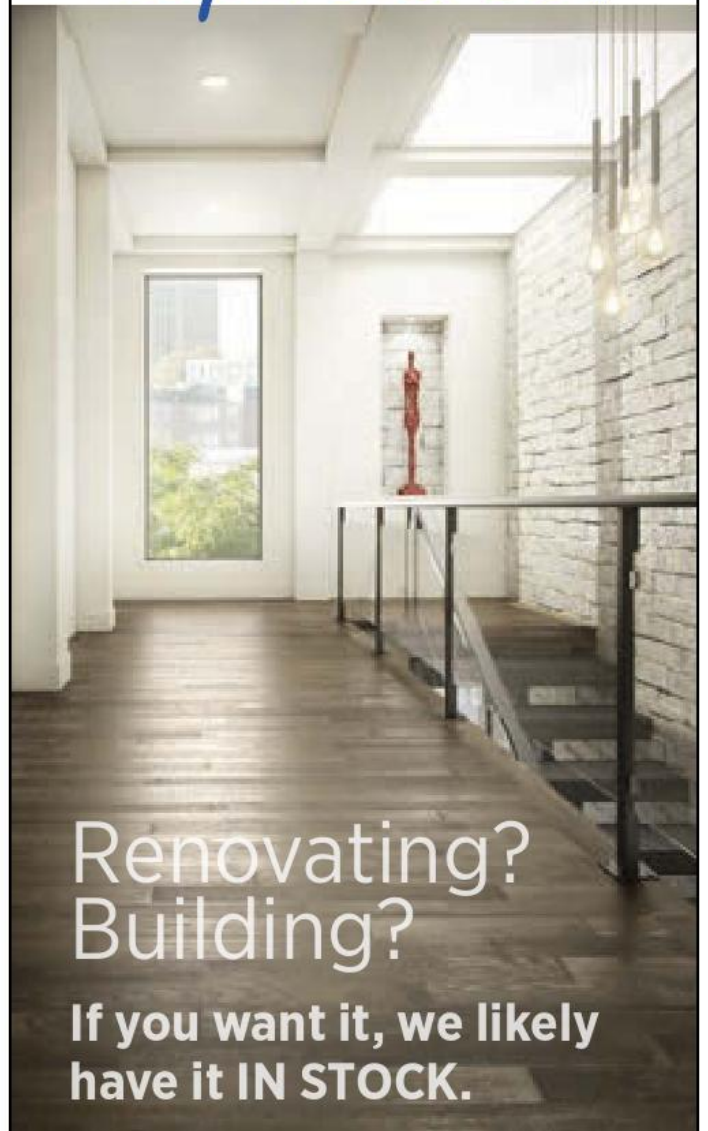
Rather than being used for its intended purpose, the barn wood that was gathered was eventually used in numerous projects around the home. The majority of the wood was ➤

Vintage gooseneck gas station lights add unique character to the exterior.





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The weathered barn wood originally slated for the exterior became shelving and storage inside.



repurposed for various storage solutions.

The reclaimed fir and other recycled wood was cut down and hung in every closet and pantry, and in the bathroom and bedroom as shelving. Various pieces of furniture were constructed out of the antique pine and fir. Two dog beds were custom-made from old pallets and casters. In some rooms, long pieces of shiplap were used as the trim.

The Journey

As first-time homebuilders, we understood going into this project that many of the design plans would either be modified in some way or altogether scrapped. Rather than using mostly reclaimed materials on the exterior and key areas within the house, the end result was an amalgamation of new and raw materials.

We found the best impact in using recycled materials came from using these materials within the interior decoration of the home. Having these details within every room unquestionably added the character we were looking for in our new construction.

We achieved our one-of-a-kind heritage barn-inspired home by blending new with wonderful reclaimed and recycled materials which allowed for a quicker build, and a more solid house. While we learned a number of lessons along the way, the challenge we presented ourselves with at the onset of the project pushed us to look at every aspect of the building process to see how we could make an environmental impact. (H)

Emory Ann Kurysh

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JULIE BARNES



HEATHER FRITZ

A GARDEN IN THE SKY

Growing a Green Roof on a Garage

Seven years ago, Toronto became the first city in North America to enact a bylaw requiring the construction of green roofs on new development. The bylaw applies to new residential and commercial projects with a floor area of 2,000 square metres and over.

We're a little further behind in Saskatoon. If you wish to eschew shingles in favour of

succulents, there are a few hurdles to jump, but the end result is worth the effort.

Permit Process

Although it's decidedly smaller than 2,000 square metres, my husband Josh and I decided to incorporate a green roof on our new detached garage in 2014. Getting the permit was the first challenge.

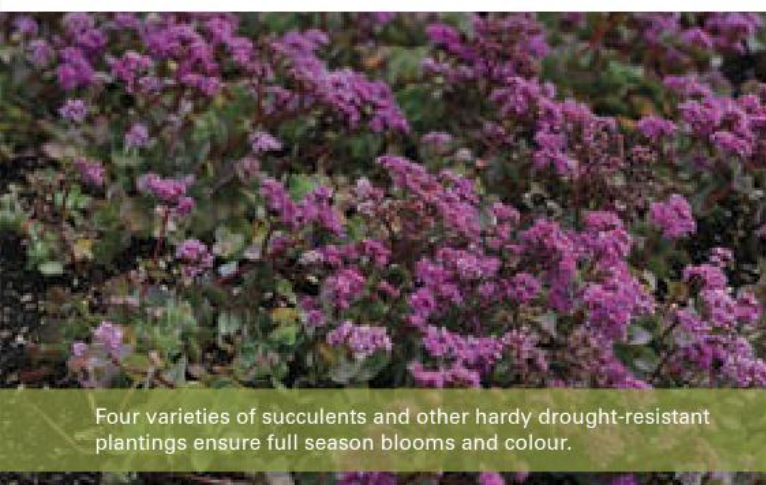
No matter what city you live in, you have to possess masochistic tendencies to enjoy the construction permitting process. Here's a heads up—you need to have a structural engineer sign off on your drawings if you're building a green roof. This added an unexpected expense and delay to our project.

Once we had our permit

in hand, we began the planning process with Michael Molaro, an accredited green roof professional and owner of Higher Groundwork Horticulture.

Picking the Plants

The goal was to create a low-maintenance green roof—one that wouldn't require irrigation once the plants were established



Four varieties of succulents and other hardy drought-resistant plantings ensure full season blooms and colour.

(assuming average rainfalls). Michael worked on the College of Law building green roof at the University of Saskatchewan. He knew from that experience what kinds of plants survive our harsh winters and thrive in a rooftop setting. We chose four varieties of succulents, as well as June grass, allium and pasture sage—all hardy, native and drought-resistant.

Spacing of the plants was based on their ability to spread in year one and two, Michael says. "We're trying to provide as much coverage of vegetation as soon as we can. Within the second or third year, it should be fully established at over 90 per cent coverage."

Soil Selection

The type and depth of ➤



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The design and colour scheme is visible from the main level and the second floor of the house.

the soil depend on what you plan to grow, so you have to pick your plants before you sort out soil. In our case, the roof has a 1/12 slope, and the soil depth rises moving up the slope (from 4 to 8 inches) to accommodate the variety of root systems and moisture levels.

"The soil substrate can't be saturated for too long. If there's clay or too much organic content, the lack of oxygen will be starved from the plant roots because it will compress over time," says Michael.

Engineered soil for green roofs often includes minerals like vermiculite and perlite, as well as crushed brick, expanded clay, slate and shale. "Things like that are heavy enough that they won't blow off the roof, but light enough that the structural load is minimized," he adds. "If you were

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growing shrubs or vegetables, you'd typically need a little more depth and certainly more organic content."

The search for soil substrate was another challenge. Unable to find an ideal growing medium mixed in Saskatchewan, we eventually sourced an Alberta supplier and had it shipped.

Materials

Beneath the soil, there are three layers of materials. Directly below is a filter fabric to keep the drainage layer below clear to carry away excess water. The drainage layer also serves as a water reservoir during dry periods. Below that is a durable, waterproofing membrane called EPDM (a synthetic rubber). Installing EPDM is best left to the professionals, so the roofing company that supplied the material tackled this task.

The perimeter of the roof is lined with stones and separated from the plantings by a steel border. This area provides protection from wind erosion, as the edges of a roof bear the brunt of the wind's force.

Planting Process

Choosing what to plant is one thing, but deciding where to place each one is another. Google image searches yielded a variety of patterns—from meticulously linear layouts, to undulating waves of colour to seemingly random arrangements. Michael created a symmetrical design that would allow us to see each variety from the house. The garage sits behind the house, and the green roof slopes down towards it.

Once the EPDM membrane and the metal divider were installed, it took two days in mid-June to hoist ➤



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OUR GREEN ROOF BY THE NUMBERS

Considering going green on your home or garage? Here are our dimensions, details and expenses for the sake of comparison. We saved money by planting the seedlings and placing the drainage layer, soil and stones ourselves. Taxes are included.

Overall roof area.....	550 sq. ft.
Green roof area.....	500 sq. ft.
Soil.....	9 cubic yards
Stones.....	2.5 cubic yards
Number of seedlings.....	700
Drainage layer.....	\$1,000 or \$2/sq. ft.
Soil substrate and stones....	\$1,300 or \$2.40/sq. ft.
Seedling cost.....	\$775 or \$1.55/sq. ft.
Soil transportation from Alberta.....	\$866
Total.....	\$3941 or \$7.88/sq. ft.

Other costs to consider: Green roof consulting, structural engineer approval, stairs or ladder to access, railings and crane rental.

Although it's not part of the green roof system, the EPDM membrane was the biggest roofing expense at \$6,880 or \$12.50/sq. ft.

up and place the drainage layer, stones, soil and plants. We rented a crane to move the soil—all 9 cubic yards of it—and stones onto the roof.

Josh, Michael and I were joined by our friend Dylan and Michael's brother Mark for the dirty work. It took the five of us three hours to plant roughly 700 seedlings. Once they were planted, we gave them a good soak.

Maintenance

During dry periods, we used a sprinkler to water the roof a few times over the first summer to help establish the plants. Now that we've reached year two, we shouldn't have to irrigate unless there are long, dry spells throughout the warmer months. We've weeded it three times; a Siberian Elm tree towers above it, dropping its seeds like confetti.

Benefits

Our green roof has been a great conversation piece with neighbours and friends. The most common question we're asked is, 'Why did you built it?'

The answer is two-fold: the environmental benefits, and the fact that it's simply nice to look at. It reduces runoff; excess water is captured in two rain barrels. It improves air quality, insulates our garage and enhances biodiversity—we've already seen bees buzzing around, collecting nectar from the flowers. The succulents bloom at different stages throughout the summer, creating an ever-changing, living tapestry for us—and the bees—to enjoy. 

Julie Barnes



Over 700 seedlings were carefully spaced and planted by accredited green roof professional Michael Maloro, Julie Barnes and Josh Remai.

Photo: Mark Maloro



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



CITY OF SASKATOON

BUY YOU A DRINK?

What's the Deal with Saskatoon Water

H₂O. We drink, we wash, we flush. In Saskatoon, residents and businesses use about 120 million litres on an average day. Living on the edge of the South Saskatchewan, in the City of Bridges, most of us don't think too much about this life-sustaining ubiquitous element. But how does our drinking water stack up?

"One of Saskatoon's great advantages is our high quality water source," says Troy LaFreniere, manager of the City's Water Treatment Plant. "Our excellent water quality is due to a number of factors." Not the least of which is a lucky geographical happenstance. But there are other reasons why Saskatoon water is tops.

Water Envy

Turbidity refers to the clarity of the water, and identifies impurities like silt, sand, bacteria, germs, chemical bits and pieces. These particles make water cloudy depending on the amount present. Measuring the turbidity and doing something about it determines water quality and safety.

Our raw, untreated river water is about 2 to 5 NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units, in case you're asked at a dinner party) and once treated, 0.2 NTU. Low NTU is good.

"We have the benefit of the settling effect the Gardiner Dam and Diefenbaker Lake provide during the spring and mountain run-off ➤



"We always rank number one in our annual municipal citizens survey for water services in quality and delivery." – Troy LaFreniere



Dr. Howard Wheeler, second from left, has extensive international experience studying and advising on flood, water resource and water quality issues. He is not only the Director of the GIWS at the University of Saskatchewan, but is also Canada Excellence Research Chair in Water Security, and leads UNESCO's arid water resources program. Wheeler, second from left, talks with members of the Global Institute on Water Security. The Institute is using the Saskatchewan River Basin as an observatory with over 15 monitoring sites throughout the Rocky Mountains, boreal forest and prairies.

Photo: David Stobbe Photography

floods. Other cities don't have that advantage," says Troy. "Edmonton, North Battleford, and Prince Albert on the North Saskatchewan can see a turbidity as high as 10,000 NTU during flooding events. The City of Regina

gets its drinking water from the Buffalo Pound Reservoir, also connected to Diefenbaker Lake, but the water becomes stagnant in the lake. It's often high in organics because it doesn't flow very well."

A Thorough Washing Up

River water is collected at intake facilities upstream of the treatment plant. It's screened and then put through a series of stringent procedures to ensure purity, good taste and safety to give Saskatoon its

enviable water supply. Since 2015, a new ultra violet disinfection facility ensures an additional layer of protection.

While the technology and chemistry are complex, Troy says the treatment procedures are streamlined. "We keep our process simple," he explains. "We remove most of the organics before we chlorinate to minimize harmful disinfection byproducts, and we use proven technologies like clarifiers, filters, and the new UV process to provide a multi-barrier system to remove all harmful bacteria and viruses." Hundreds of tests, including third party tests, are conducted daily.

Once the water is safe, it is distributed through the City's system of water mains and into individual homes and businesses. When a homeowner turns on the tap and fills a glass, "99.999 per cent of all harmful bacteria and viruses have been removed," Troy says.

The Tap Dance

Given assurances that Saskatoon's drinking water is clean, safe and tastes good, are home filtration systems or bottled water just a waste of money?

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Should people be concerned about the addition of inorganic chemicals and disinfectants? Some people still fret about fluoride, which is also added to prevent tooth decay in accordance with Health Canada regulations and the Canadian Dental Association guidelines.

Helping people understand the treatment process involves "a fairly lengthy discussion," Troy says. But in a nutshell, "The purpose of the inorganic chemicals are to remove harmful bacteria and viruses and the chemicals are removed in the process as well," Troy explains. "Others, like calcium carbonate from lime softening and potassium permanganate, are well below and maximum allowable concentrations (MACs) as defined in Health Canada Drinking Water Guidelines."

There's nothing more gloom-inducing than seeing an emergency potable water tank pull up on a frigid winter morning, and the City is replacing old watermain infrastructure to keep the system problems to a minimum. If a main breaks and particulates enter the system, household water for drinking, bathing, cooking, and brushing teeth can be compromised.

"It's critical in any water break situation that residents follow the precautionary drinking water advisory information posted on a homeowner's door handle in the affected area. In any water break, there is the potential for water contamination," Troy says. "We cannot guarantee the quality of the water until the mains have been repaired flushed and tested."

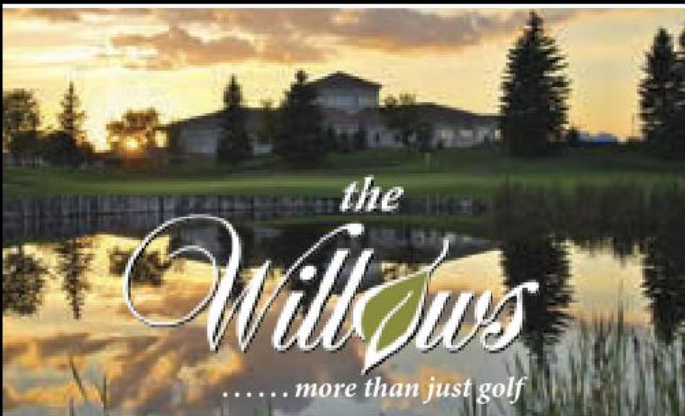
Although the repair may only take a few hours, the bacteriological tests take 48 hours. We advise people to boil or do not use the water depending on the specific circumstances of each situation."

Bottled water is an option during emergencies, but not deemed necessary on a regular basis according to the City. (See Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca and click on link to FAQs About Bottle Water.)

Better Read Than Lead

Residents brush up on property specs to determine whether lead pipes still exist in their homes. The City posts information on its website about lead pipes in houses built prior to 1950. Though Saskatoon water is "virtually lead free," it is suggested ➤

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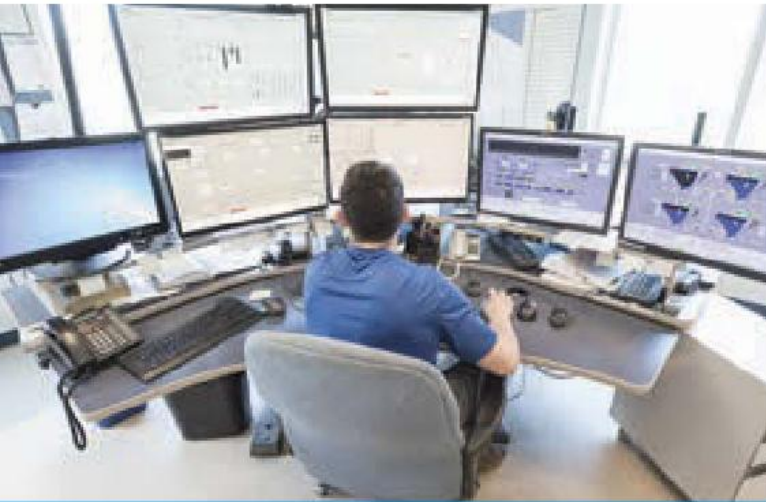
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Residents can read the City of Saskatoon's 2015 Annual Water Quality Report online at www.saskatoon.ca later this summer. Click on Water and Wastewater tab under Services for Residents, Power and Water.

that children under six or pregnant women get drinking water from another source if lead pipes are present. A simple filter will not remove lead; a National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) certified filter is required. Tap water can be tested and homeowners can search under 'laboratories testing' online or in the yellow pages. The City also offers a voluntary Lead Pipe Replacement Program.

Standing Guard

Natural events or human activities such as dumping chemicals, sewage, oils or waste directly in to the river can compromise water quality. The City of Saskatoon is part of a South Saskatchewan River Stewardship Team that tests and monitors activities on the river.

A compromised water quality communication team includes individuals from the City (Water, labs, communications, Public Works, Emergency Measures), the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency (the provincial regulator), Saskatoon Health Region, and Saskwater (the Crown commercial water utility).

A Thirst for Growth

While today's Saskatoon uses 120 million litres a day, climbing to 250 million during summer months as people water lawns and gardens, there are plans in place to meet anticipated peak demands of 300 million litres daily. Saskatoon's water plant is one of the oldest in western Canada with initial pump stations built in 1906, the year Saskatoon became a city. In 2014, a \$77 million project saw the Avenue H and 42nd Street reservoirs expand and upgrade. A new reservoir and pump station is planned for the Evergreen subdivision in the next five years, and the eastside water treatment plant will be operational in 10 to 15.

"I can say with confidence that Saskatoon has a highly trained and diligent team of professionals treating, monitoring and protecting our drinking water," Troy LaFreniere says. "We take this responsibility very seriously and we're extremely proud of the service we provide. We ensure Saskatoon's drinking water exceeds the highest standards. And it tastes really good!" 

Karin Melberg Schwier



THE ACADEMIC LIFE AQUATIC

Within a skipping stone's throw of the South Saskatchewan River, on the University of Saskatchewan campus, water is a serious subject. Since March 2011, the Global Institute for Water Security (GIWS) has been working on tools, techniques and policies to sustainably manage the world's freshwater resources.

Led by Dr. Howard Wheater, one of the world's foremost hydrologists, the Institute faculty and other scientists work to understand how climate change, land management practices, and development of natural resources are affecting water environments. The Institute is concerned not only with issues world wide, but has a particular focus on western Canada. Dr. Wheater is expert in hydrological science and sustainable water resource management.

"The prairies have significant issues, both in terms of water quality and water quantity," explains Dr. Wheater. "So within this region, we are fortunate to have access to the relatively high quality water of the South Saskatchewan."

"Numerous reservoirs affect flow and there is a large number of users dependent on water for urban, agricultural, and industrial needs, not to mention the sensitive biology," he adds. "This creates complex management questions, particularly in light of wet dry cycles so common in the prairies, and the effects of climate change."

The 340,000 square kilometer Saskatchewan River Basin is the major water resource for three prairie provinces. Dr. Wheater's research teams are "improving our ability to predict river flows, and understand how water quality and river basin ecosystems respond to climate change," he explains. "We want to ensure that water decision-making takes into account a range of values and perspectives about the meaning, value and use of water on the prairies and beyond."

LIVING THE GREEN LIFE

Daily Sustainability Takes No Sacrifice



At Jason and Sheri Praski's house just outside Saskatoon, the open-concept living room and kitchen features a wall of windows overlooking a swath of prairie, with Saskatoon in the distance. At night, the city's lights sparkle on the horizon.

The yard is well kept, with two large gardens, and a

playset the teenage children don't use anymore. They have two cars and a motorcycle in their garage, and they're looking forward to their next car purchase.

From the outside, the Praskis are like any other Saskatchewan family but when you look closer, it's a different story.

A Green Family

The house was built with passive solar design in mind. Their bedrooms and bathrooms face south, so plenty of windows let the light and heat in, and an overhang sits at just the right angle to block the hot summer sun.

They constructed the house

with double two by fours, giving them thicker walls that they stuffed with recycled fibre insulation. The triple pane windows are coated on the east and west sides to let light in but not too much heat.

"A lot of the energy efficient choices we made, you don't notice here," Jason says,



 **ASHLEIGH MATTERN**

 **HEATHER FRITZ**

"besides the solar panels."

The Praskis have lived in their home since October 2005, but added the solar panels a few years ago. When they built the house, it was hard to find builders who were familiar with energy efficient design principles and technology. Even the open-concept design

hadn't become popular yet, but it turns out it's one of the best layouts for energy efficiency—you need fewer windows and light bulbs to illuminate the space, and both heating and cooling circulates more easily.

In the garage, they have two hybrid cars and an electric motorcycle, and they've ➤

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Hybrid cars and an electric motorcycle are just two choices the family has made to reduce pollution.



"We feel we sacrifice nothing to live an environmentally friendly way of life."



pre-ordered the new Tesla Model 3, a fully electric car.

"We recognize the hypocrisy. We're a two-car family, and that's not exactly environmentally friendly," Sheri says. "We do other things to try to balance that, like growing our own vegetables, planting trees, buying offset credits for some of our travel."

Making Sacrifices?

At the Praski household, being environmentally friendly is a way of life, and from their point of view, they've sacrificed nothing to get to where they are.

"We don't have to go backwards or suffer at all to cut back on pollution," Jason says.

"It's actually the opposite," Sheri adds. "You make a few choices and you invest just a little bit of time and energy, and honestly our lifestyle is better than most. Our income can do other things besides pay energy bills, water bills and pay for gasoline."

They garden, store and freeze their fresh-grown

fruits and vegetables, keep a compost and choose locally grown foods and consumables as much as possible. Sheri and Jason work from home whenever possible to cut down on the amount of time they spend commuting. When she can, Sheri will drive to the edge of the city and then bike the rest of the way.

Are these sacrifices? Or are they making their lives better? It depends on your outlook, but an optimist will see possibilities rather than sacrifices.

Allyson Brady, executive director of the Saskatchewan Environmental Society (SES), says there are opportunities every day to make decisions around sustainability.

"You have to do what works for you, and what works for you almost always works for the planet," Allyson says. "Making small changes every day does help you in the long run."

For example, how will you get to work today? Riding your bike will be better for you, and for the environment. Choosing not to idle your car when ➤



waiting somewhere will save you gas, and be better for the environment.

Dollars and Sense

"Sometimes you can look at a big solar installation on someone's home and think, 'There's no way I can afford that!'" Allyson says. "But how

can you not afford it? Over the lifetime of being in that home, you'll save more money than you spend. It's sometimes looking at a longer term vision than a short term."

The Praskis' solar system is tied into the SaskPower grid through the Net Metering Program; any excess energy

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Growing vegetables and composting are practices that are just good habits.

they produce is delivered to the grid, and a bi-directional meter keeps track of it. Extra electricity is banked, applied to the current month's consumption and then carried forward if it goes unused or is applied as a discount to their bill if they drew from the grid.

"People don't hesitate

spending \$10,000 more on their granite countertops," Jason says. "The countertops may be better quality, but they don't earn you anything back whereas \$10,000 into a solar system pays itself off, keeps paying you in energy savings and you're not polluting as much."

Their solar system is ➤



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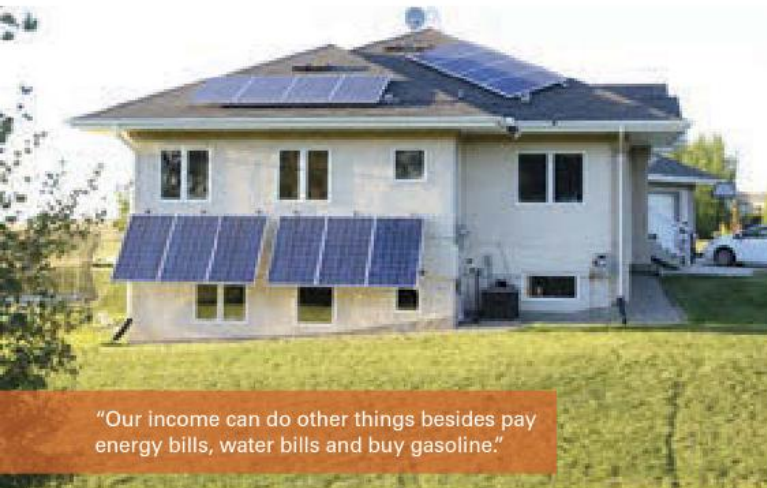
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SOLAR ENERGY BY THE NUMBERS

- 60-70%** The amount the price for solar panels has dropped over the past 10 years.
- 6.5** The average number of sunlight hours Saskatoon receives per day.
- \$10,000** An estimated price for solar panels, without installation and permit costs.
- 20%** The rebate SaskPower offers on solar systems, up to a total \$20,000 refund.
- 10** An estimated number of years it would take for the solar system to pay for itself.

four years old. They bought the system a few years after the house was built once solar panel prices had gone down. Allyson with SES says prices have dropped 60 to 70 per cent over the past 10 years.

"Solar is becoming more affordable, and once it's there,

if you're using solar energy for electricity, then you don't pay for electricity," Allyson says, adding that once electric vehicles are widely available, "you won't have to buy gas again. What a fun thought!"

Sheri and Jason are almost there. By plugging their electric

motorcycle and future electric car into their solar-energized house, they're beating the gas-guzzling system.

"Nothing here is that incredible," Sheri says. "We're saving a lot of money and having a much more relaxed lifestyle because we don't have to worry

about the cost of utilities, cost of electricity, cost of gas," Sheri says. "We're insulated against that. Literally!" 

Ashleigh Mattern





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 KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER
AND AMANDA SOULODRE

HOME FOOD:

Canned Goods – Pickles & Salsa

Most people in Saskatchewan probably have memories that revolve around jars of preserved foods, like beets and pickles or even jams, perhaps made with fruits and vegetables grown in Grandma's garden. While it may be an older generation that historically utilized this process to

an excellent degree, home canning is actually experiencing a revival of sorts. Some people are diving into it as a hobby, and some have more practical reasons, like saving money or not letting their garden goodies go to waste. Either way, canning produces fresh, delicious fare that can

keep those summer tomatoes or cucumbers around long after the snow falls.

Canning developed in a few places at once, around the early 1800s, but it was Napoleon who started it all. During the Napoleonic Wars, the French needed to be able to supply their troops with food,

so they wanted a method of preserving large amounts, and offered a cash reward to anyone who could help. Enter French confectioner and brewer, Nicolas Appert, who noted that food cooked in a jar did not spoil unless the seal leaked (Louis Pasteur would eventually show us



Start with clean, fresh produce, blemish-free garlic and undivided attention.

that microbes caused such spoilage). The French weren't successful in rolling out this plan before the end of the conflicts, but the technology inspired people in Europe and the US to continue to perfect Appert's methods.

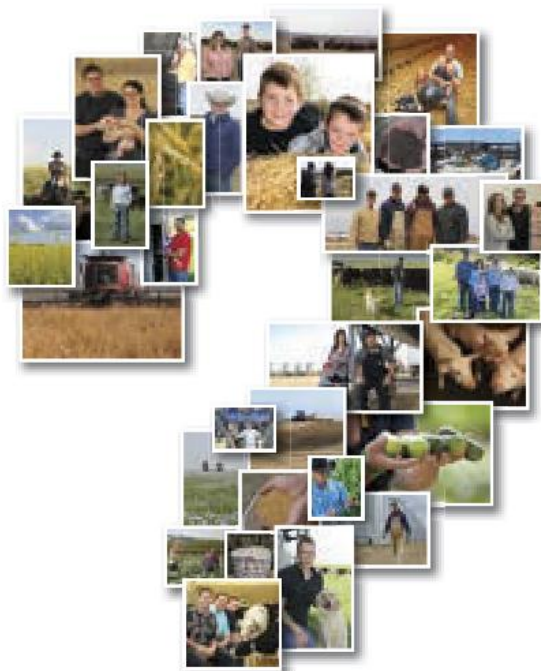
Fast forward to today here in Canada, and you'll find

me tasting homemade salsa from a jar presented to me by Rick Schwier and his wife Karin Melberg Schwier (yes, the same Karin from within the pages of this magazine!). It's fresh and delectable salsa, light years apart from the icky, flavourless store-bought mush.

"Rick's the cook and ➤

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Homemade salsa is one of the best ways to capture the sun-ripened flavours of garden vegetables.

ZESTY TOMATO SALSA with Chipotle in Adobo Sauce

- | | |
|--|--|
| 10 cups roughly chopped ripe tomatoes | 3 cloves garlic, minced |
| 5 cups chopped and seeded green bell peppers | 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, minced |
| 5 cups chopped onions | 3 tsp salt |
| 2 1/2 cups chopped and seeded hot peppers | 1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste |
| 1 1/4 cups cider vinegar | 1–2 tablespoons chipotle in adobo sauce (careful, this stuff is potent!) |

Directions:

Prepare jars and lids. Boil jars in large pot. Lids can be brought to a boil in a smaller pot. Retrieve each with sterilized tongs. Don't remove from hot water until you're ready to fill with salsa.

Making the salsa:

1. Combine all ingredients except tomato paste in large sauce pot.
2. Simmer until desired thickness.
3. Stir in tomato paste.
4. Ladle sauce into hot sterilized jars, leave about 1/4 inch of headspace.
5. Remove lids from hot water and screw on firmly. Wipe down jars with warm damp cloth, give another little twist on the lids to ensure tight seal. You should start hearing that popping sound as the jars and lids cool.

Great served with lime tortilla chips, tacos or taco salad and maybe a margarita.

salsa maker in the family," says Karin, "but I like to make jams, chutneys and garlic dill pickles."

We decided to focus on garlic dill pickles so I can see how to make my own, but we included their bonus salsa recipe as well (see left).

Karin started canning years ago when she lived with a family in New Zealand, but

she really learned the ropes with pickles here about 30 years ago with the help of a family friend, Yvonne Brown. It's a good idea, she says, to get yourself a wise mentor.

"For pickles," Karin explains, "use good, firm cukes. I like to get small ones so you don't have to slice them. Wash them well, but not until you're ready to use them. I've had entire

SWEET REFRIGERATOR PICKLES

You'll need:

Two to three quarts (that's 8 to 12 cups) of cucumbers, sliced medallion style (not lengthwise)

Put into a large heat-resistant bowl

Brine:

- 3 cups white sugar
- 2 cups white vinegar
- 2 tbsp pickling salt
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp celery seed
- 1 tsp mustard seed

Boil brine for 5 minutes.

Pour while hot over the sliced cucumbers.

Ladle the cucumbers and brine into clean glass sealers—may add more cucumbers since they will compress in the hot brine. Leave 1/2 inch headspace. Put on lids, tighten and refrigerate. If you're going to use soon, don't worry too much about a really tight seal. But it's possible these will stay crisp a very long time if you don't open the jar. Either way, store in the refrigerator.



bags of cukes rot nearly before my eyes because I waited too long to process them. If they're not hard to the pinch, be careful."

People will develop their own techniques, but in terms of the equipment you'll need, it's pretty basic: a pot that holds enough water to keep jars in while sterilizing and of course, jars with good lids. A jar lifter or good tongs will also come in handy.

"You don't need fancy new canning jars all the time," suggests Karin. "Reuse good ones that jam and pickles come in from the store. Look for the size of jars you want with that nifty built-in rubber ring in the lid. Be careful, though. If any jars or lids show signs of wear, rust or defect, discard and use better ones." If you're nervous about hidden bacteria, go with all new jars and lids every time.

The process is fairly simple. Wash and dry the cucumbers, then trim away the blossom end, which contains enzymes that may lead to soggy pickles. You can leave the pickles whole or slice into spears. Karin slices bigger ones so she can fit more into

each jar, but it's up to you.

Add your spices, garlic and dill to the sterilized jars, followed by packing the cucumbers in as tight as you can without smashing them. Leave about 1/2 an inch of space below the top of the jar.

Hot and clean are the buzzwords you'll want to keep in mind. Home canning is totally safe if done correctly, but it can kill you by way of botulism if you're sloppy or not paying attention. Make sure all your equipment is sterilized.

"Keep your jars and lids in hot water until the very last minute," says Karin. "I keep mine sitting in a low boil."

To make the brine for garlic dill pickles, see recipe. Use pickling salt, not regular table salt. Bring the brine solution to a boil and fill each jar, holding it firmly with a cloth while you ladle it in, still as hot as possible.

"You'll probably dribble a bit on the edge of the jar mouth," says Karin. "Dab that off with a hot clean cloth so you don't introduce bacteria or the salty brine to the lip of the jar."

Remove the air bubbles by tapping the jar softly ➤

GARLIC DILL PICKLES



Put jars in enough water to cover them, then boil. Put lids (and rings if using) in a shallow pan of water, boil (easier to extract). Pull out each jar with tongs, shake out excess water and line up on tea towels. Do this only when your brine is ready so the jars don't have time to cool.

Into each sterilized jar:

2 cloves garlic per jar
(*5 or 6)
1/4 tsp dry red pepper flakes (*a big pinch)
4 or 5 whole black pepper corns
2-3 dill heads, maybe a few feathery dill fronds too

Stuff cukes in tightly, stand on end to get as many in as possible

(Larger cukes can be sliced, or small/sliced carrots can be used)

Pinch of alum on top of each

Wipe lip of each jar after fill

Brine:

12 cups water
4 cups white vinegar
1 cup pickling salt

Stir brine and bring to a boil. Ladle into each jar quickly; a 1/2 cup measuring cup works well. Brine should be as hot as possible when it goes into the jars. Hold jars firmly with cloth. Put on hot lids and twist tightly. When jars are all filled and sealed, wipe down with warm cloth. Slightly tighten lids a little more. Not too hard, just a nice firm fit.

As jars cool, you should start hearing a very pleasing 'pop' as each lid contracts and seals well.

Makes roughly 5 to 6 large jars, depending on jar size and how many cukes in each. You can make your own adaptations like extra or fewer black pepper corns, garlic, more or less pepper flakes as you experiment. See sidebar on next page. This recipe also works with sliced carrots!

(*A special note: this recipe originated with Yvonne Brown and Karin has adapted it over the years.)



Even Craig has to put elbow grease into opening well-sealed jars.



ADAPT ANY PICKLE RECIPE TO MAKE IT YOURS

- Like spice? Think about adding more peppercorns, red pepper flakes, jalapeno or chipotle peppers.
- Garlic and dill your thing? The recipe says 2 of each, but add away to fire up your taste buds.
- Sweet and Crunchy? Add a tablespoon of sugar.
- Herbtastic—Adding fresh cilantro, ginger, basil, parsley, a dry bay leaf or sage will add flavour to the brine and infuse your tasty cucumbers.
- Adult Tip—Once your pickles are pickled and edible, save the pickle juice to flavour your vodka for a delicious Caesar or Dill Pickle Martini. Seriously!

and top off with more brine if necessary, then apply the hot lid. Once you have a good, clean, tight seal, wipe the jars down with the warm cloth. As the jars cool, you should hear that ever-so-satisfying 'pop' sound that indicates the jar has sealed well. Karin likes to wait six to eight weeks before consuming.

If you find a jar that hasn't sealed properly, put it in the fridge, wait until it pickles and eat that first. If you processed the jars properly, they can be put on a shelf, where they'll last for at least a year or more.

If garlic dills don't appeal to you, try making Sweet Refrigerator Pickles (see recipe on pg. 52). Karin has made these, too. More of a sweet bread and

butter variety. Try to wait at least 48 hours before you eat them though, as the flavour will improve as they marinate. Opinions vary; they're good for a couple of weeks in the fridge. If you put them in glass jars with tight fitting lid, they will last longer, but should still be stored in the refrigerator.

Voila! Garlic dill or sweet, you've got two options for a delicious, crispy snack, wonderfully sour with notes of refreshing dill or freshly sweet and tangy. You can eat them yourself as a snack or with a sandwich or, like Karin and Rick, you can share them with your friends and neighbours, a perfect home-made gift for any occasion. 

Craig Silliphant

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HOMEtown Reflections

 JEFF O'BRIEN

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE SASKATOON EX



Photo: Saskatoon PrairieLand

If there was an official sound of summer, it would sound like an afternoon at the Exhibition. If there was one smell that you could say, "That's what summer smells like," it would probably involve some combination of cooking oil, hot asphalt and those little Tom Thumb doughnuts you get to watch being made right in front of you. The Ex has been a summer tradition here since 1907. But its beginnings as a fall agricultural fair go all the way back to 1886.

The first Saskatoon Exhibition was a one-day harvest fair, held where Nutana Collegiate is now. There were no rides, games or food vendors. People went primarily to enter their livestock and other farm products in the competitions, to learn how others ran their farms and maybe to win one of the cash prizes being offered.

In 1895, the Exhibition moved across the river, and by 1903,

Saskatoon fair, 1909.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – PH 95-56-9

when it first set up in present-day Kinsmen Park, it had been extended to three days and you could buy food from kitchens run by the ladies of the various

churches. There had always been horse racing, of course, but now there was also some local entertainment at the grandstand in the afternoons after

the judging was done.

On the Move

But by 1907, Saskatoon was a city on the move. There ➤

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Poster for the 1888 Exhibition.

Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – LH 4800

New grandstand and midway attractions were also added, with rides and diversions of every kind, including animal shows, the bodiless head of an otherwise quite normal young lady, a palmist, a mind reader and a woman with the body of a spider.

were new buildings everywhere, work had started on a modern sewer and water system and there were three new bridges going up, including the long-awaited Traffic Bridge. That year, the Ex was held in summer instead of fall as a way to get bigger crowds. New grandstand and midway attractions were also added, with rides and diversions of every kind, including animal shows, the bodiless head of an otherwise quite normal young lady, a palmist, a mind reader and a woman with the body of a spider. It was, the newspaper enthused, “a real city exhibition.” This was also the year they switched on the lights in Saskatoon. A reported 10,000 visitors attended the Ex on August 7, 1907, the day the

city’s electrical system was first powered up, and the Exhibition could finally stay open after dark.

But the Exhibition was having money troubles. The problem was that the buildings were temporary; put up just before the show and torn down at great cost afterwards. The Ex needed a permanent home, with permanent buildings. It got them just in time for the 1909 show, on a parcel of land just south of town, between the river and the railway tracks. It was a perfect location and is today called Prairieland Park.

More changes came. After 1911, the Exhibition was no longer simply an agricultural fair, although that continued to be important. But there was an added focus on commerce, industry, science and the arts. Its mandate would now be to “exhibit products, wares, goods, merchandise, machinery, mercantile inventions and improvements of every nature, name and land...”

The Boom

As Saskatoon boomed in the next few years, so did the Ex. In 1913, the city’s brand new streetcar system carried 20,000 fairgoers on one day alone. Even the economic collapse after 1913 and the war that followed didn’t dampen Exhibition fever. Some 62,000 people rode the streetcars to the Ex in 1915—the worst year of the recession—with 83,000 the following year and 114,000 in 1917, forcing them to add



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – A 2026

The newest in modern business machines on display in 1949.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – A 2026

extra cars and to post signs reminding passengers not to ride on the roof or hang off the fenders.

During both the First and Second World Wars, the Exhibition grounds and buildings were leased to the military. But come Exhibition Week, the army scrunched over and the show went on. For one

thing, the recruiting booths did a brisk business among the young men attending the fair.

In the 1920s, art gallery exhibits—precursors, perhaps, to today's Showcase of the Arts—were first displayed. Dog racing came to the Ex in 1923, and automobile races, which had been held since 1911, were quite popular among the local

Cattle on display during a calf-feeding competition at the 1930 Exhibition.

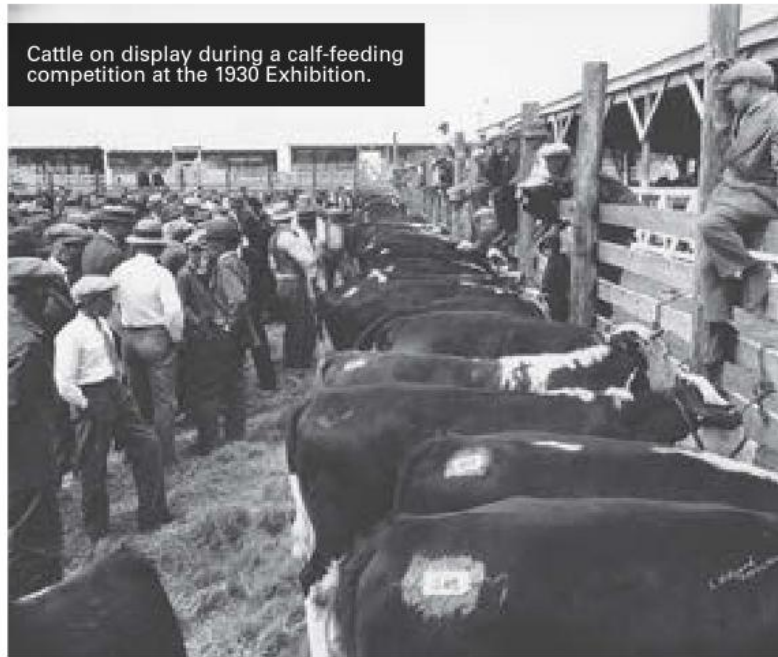


Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – A 444

hot-rodders throughout the 1920s.

The Struggle

The Exhibition struggled during the bleak days of the Great Depression. They offered free admission and special ride vouchers for children to encourage attendance. For several years, the old Provincial

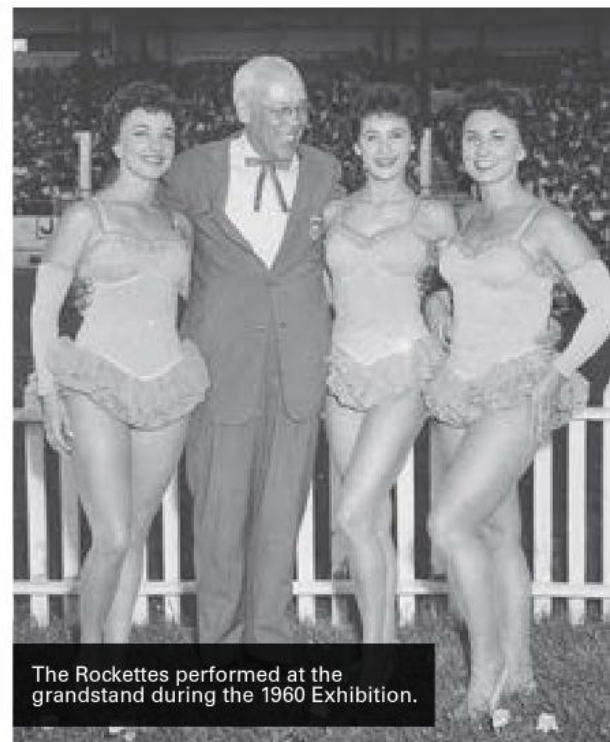
Government Building, which usually housed the domestic, craft and school exhibits, was used as a federal relief camp for single, unemployed men.

Things picked up for the Ex after the Second World War, kicked off, perhaps, by the arrival in 1949 of the famous burlesque dancer Gypsy Rose Lee, who had signed a ➤



Hell drivers on the Wall of Death at the 1951 Exhibition.

Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – B 4294



The Rockettes performed at the grandstand during the 1960 Exhibition.

Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives

The Royal American Shows midway at night, 1953.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – B 14542

whopping \$10,000 a week contract with Royal American Shows to take her act on the road with them.

Mid-Century

By mid-decade, Saskatoon was booming again. Fireworks, which had first lit up the Exhibi-

tion in 1907, were now being held nightly, and the midway blazed with neon. The Kinsmen Club, which had been raffling off cars at the Ex since the 1930s, sponsored an annual “dream home” lottery in the 1950s and early 1960s, with houses built at the Exhibition

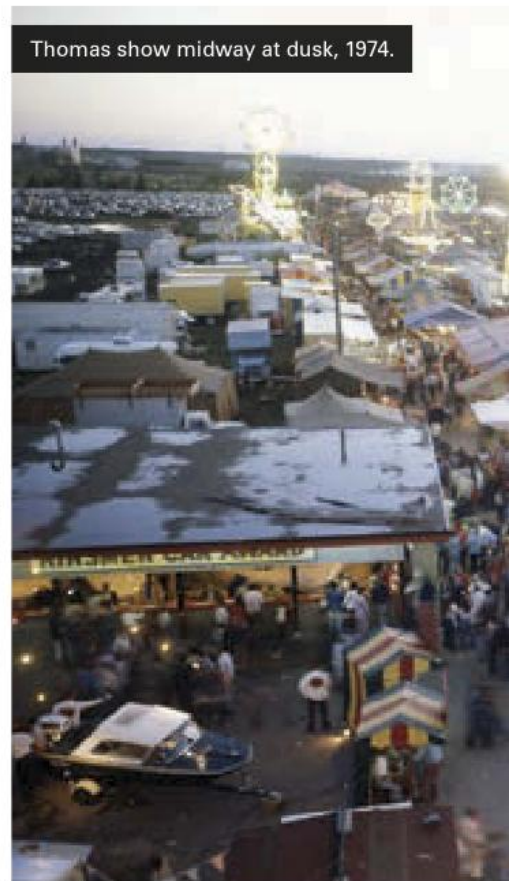
and then moved to a location of the winner’s choice afterwards.

In 1962, fairgoers had a choice of 50 different rides, including the Wild Mouse (according to this writer’s elder siblings, an experience unrivalled for sheer terror), the Paratrooper, the Round-Up and the Calypso—a

giant double ferris wheel. One indicator of how the world had changed since the early days was the 1967 exhibit by the Saskatoon Unidentified Flying Objects Club. The truth, as they say, is out there.

Through the 1960s and ‘70s, the grandstand shows became

Thomas show midway at dusk, 1974.



Crowds line up to walk through the 1960 Exhibition Dream Home.

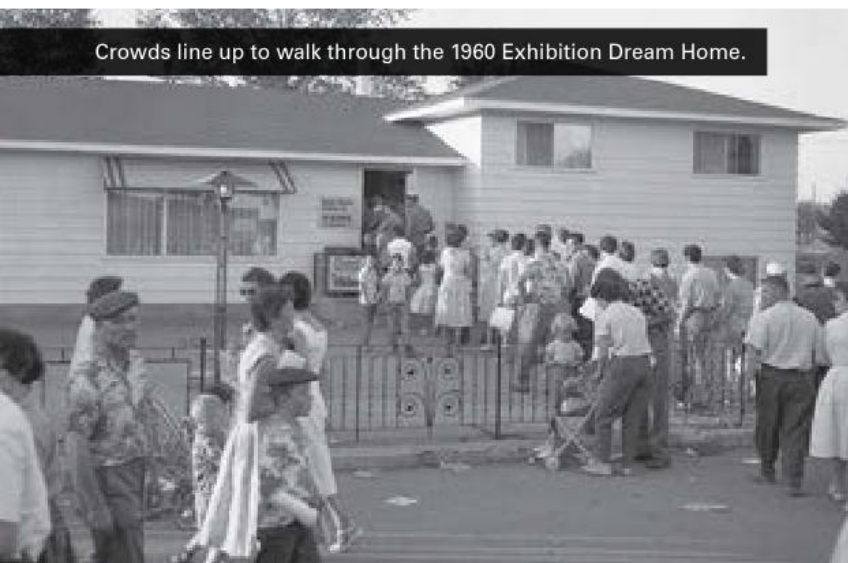


Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – B 7835

Inside the 1960 Exhibition Dream Home.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – B 7839



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – CP 6854

more lavish, often including big-name out-of-town musical acts. The 1967 grandstand featured the always-popular Don Messer and his Islanders, as well as a special Friday night “teen” performance by the Los Angeles-based psychedelic rock band, the Electric Prunes, backed up by Saskatoon’s own Witness Inc., featuring Kenny Shields (later of Streetheart fame).

Not Just a Country Fair

Over the years, the Saskatoon Exhibition has changed and changed again. Gone are the free TB X-rays given to all Ex attendees in 1944. The “Indian Village,” which saw people from the Whitecap First Nation dressing in traditional costumes and camping in teepees, has been gone since the 1970s, as have the annual baseball tournaments and the

Ex-by-night games, 2007.



Photo: Jeff O'Brien

Farm Boys and Girls Camps, discontinued in the '60s. The sideshow tents, home to some of the more dubious entertainments, are long gone, and “Midnight Madness” where fairgoers could ride all night, is a fading memory. The name has even changed. In 1970, the Exhibition took on a pioneer days look when it merged with the Pion-era exhibition and became “Saskachimo,” before

being re-named the Saskatoon Prairieland Exhibition in 1979.

But overall, the sounds, sights and smells of the Ex have remained much the same. Every year we return to it by the thousands, to eat the food and wander the exhibits, to ride the rides, chance a few dollars on the games and maybe indulge in a few little Tom Thumbs. (H)

Jeff O'Brien

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 **KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER**

BACKYARD THEATRE

Outdoor Movies and Sports Fun for Family, Neighbours & Freeloaders

When Darryl and Carla built a backyard theatre, it was a big draw for friends, family and neighbours. One frequent visitor sheepishly admitted he felt like a freeloader, so the couple dubbed the popular entertainment area the Free-loaders Bar and Grill.

Whether people drop in to cheer on the Riders, come to

fisticuffs over *Avalanche* versus *Red Wings*, or to enjoy movie night, the classic outdoor movie theatre at home is making a retro comeback. The applications range from low-end to awe-inspiring entertainment.

Carla, an operating room attendant, says while some people invest in a cabin

at the lake, they view their Richmond Heights backyard as their escape. Sons Josh and Nate used to skate on a small rink their dad built, but are happy with its conversion now to a big screen TV, bar and barbeque area.

"We developed a little oasis, especially overlooking Archibald Park with no possi-

bility of anyone building to block our view," says Carla. "There's nothing better than pulling up the lounge chairs, having a glass of wine and watching a movie outside on a warm summer night."

User-Friendly Technology

Home theatre technology has become much more



Darryl can adjust the awning so whatever the weather, the show can go on.



affordable in recent years. A 60-inch flat screen ten years ago might have cost \$8,000 to \$12,000, but today maybe \$700 to \$6,000, says Darryl. He started with a 50-inch, moved up, and now is considering an even larger model. A friend recently purchased a TV that covers an entire wall in his home. "When he watches the

Roughriders, it's like he's about to be trampled!" By comparison, Darryl doesn't want to go "too crazy."

Many of today's user-friendly devices don't require a technician to install or maintain. With high fibre optic service, Darryl remotely "routes from the house" the movie channel, Netflix, music and sports ➤



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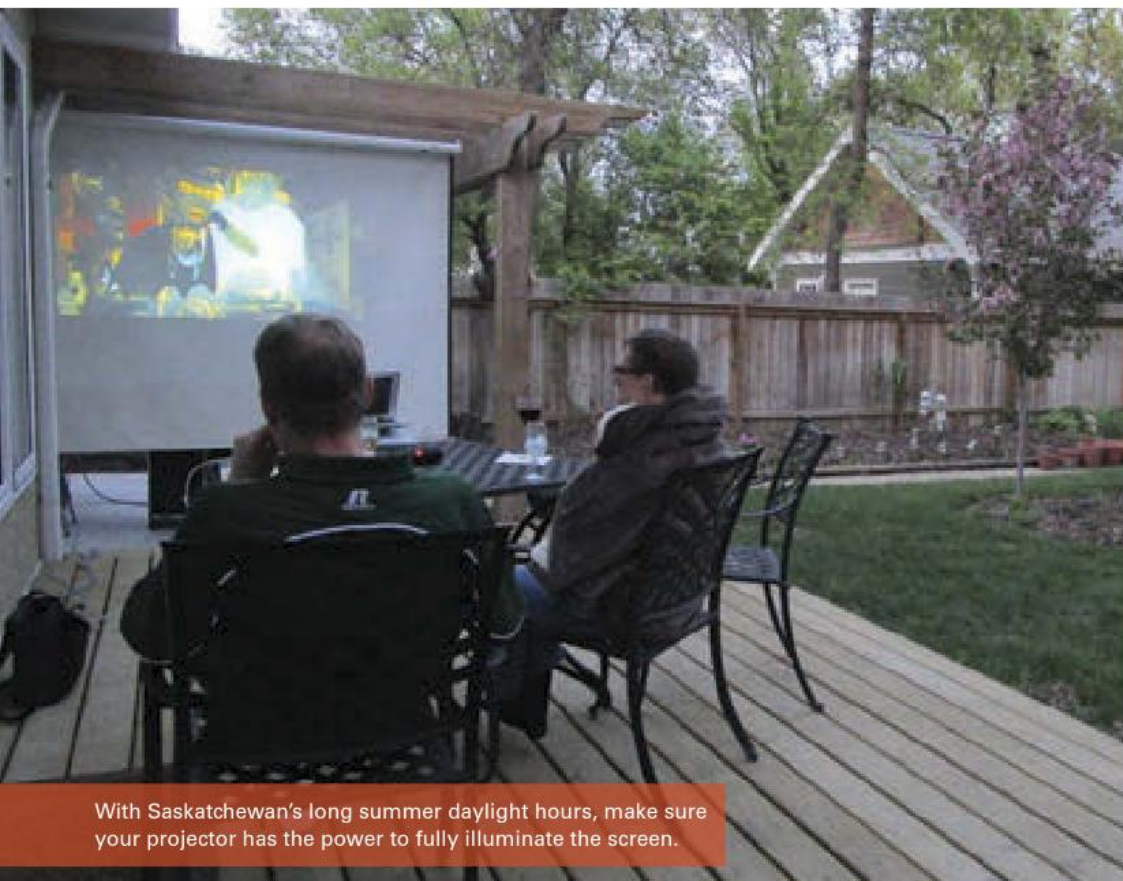
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With Saskatchewan's long summer daylight hours, make sure your projector has the power to fully illuminate the screen.

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Land of the Midnight Sun

One fabulous fact about Saskatoon summers is a lot of daylight. But that's not helpful for outdoor movies. Projectors should have sufficiently high lumens—high illumination levels—for the best picture. People sometimes opt for more expensive equipment with higher resolution, but there's not always a lot of bang for the buck. Better to focus on lighting up the screen sufficiently for best viewing during long, well-lit summer evenings.

Do some research and ask professionals who specialize in home theatres for advice. High-end integrated systems will require some additional expertise.

DIY Movie House

Darryl, who works for Vipond

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TECHNICAL BITS AND PIECES

There's a range with everything from inexpensive to mind-boggling when it comes to outfitting an outdoor home theatre. Movies are produced with a dynamic range of sound and many have lots of rumbly stuff, so go for sufficient base in your sound system. A cheaper system can choke and render those impressive explosions far less spectacular.

Other considerations, depending on your budget:

Cheapies

DVDs or wifi access to subscription applications (e.g., Netflix, HBO, CraveTV, Shomi, sports channels)

Video: Inexpensive projector with a screen, sheet or white surfaced wall

Laptop computer or extend cables from home systems to projector

Bluetooth or external computer sound system

High-end

Mounted monitors or large screen four-season TVs that can stay outside even in the winter

Expensive projectors with high illumination and resolution (depends on ambient light, screen size)

Dedicated video lines routed from home system

Home theatre sound system

Fire Protection, helped his carpenter father and got "handy" at a young age. He wanted functional protection for an outdoor big screen TV, so he built what resembles an outdoor kitchen. It houses a bar, fridge, countertops, storage and beer keg. A retractable awning can be adjusted to extend beyond the overhang

so even in the rain, a movie or the game isn't off limits. Directional speakers allow people to visit undisturbed elsewhere in the area.

While favourite lounge chairs in front offer the best view, the TV swivel mount pulls out two feet so people seated anywhere in the backyard, in the hot tub or even up on the

second storey balcony have a good view, too. When it's time to lock up, an overhead storage shed door rolls down, all tied in to the home security system.

Simpler Portable Solutions

For homeowners not as handy or ambitious, who just want a quick and dirty theatre

al fresco, a laptop computer connected to a projector with a simple set of speakers will do fine.

Aiming a projector at a white garden shed or garage wall, hanging a pull-down screen from the pergola or even pinning up a white bed sheet on a clothesline on a calm evening can suffice. ➤



LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

It's not nice to build view-blocking homes, nor do raucous backyard attractions foster good next-door relations. Darryl recommends talking to neighbours first about the project. Sound-absorbing landscaping helps. If a movie night is planned, invite the neighbours or give them a heads up, and wrap up at a decent hour.

Directional speakers and headphones keep the noise down or eliminate it.

An awning not only provides protection from the elements, it can also cut any unwanted light that may shine into the next-door property. No one wants a drive-in movie glaring through their bedroom window.

Add some comfortable lounge chairs, a space heater to extend the season and citronella candles to ward off mosquitoes. Don't forget the popcorn!

That Old Time Feeling

Maybe outdoor movies stir some primordial memories of watching fire flicker on cave walls, but there is something nostalgic about it. For those who never experienced drive-in movie dates, there's still a friendly thrill about watching a show outside after dark. Whatever the reason, outdoor home

theatres are a popular way to connect with family, friends, and if you're nice about it, neighbours, too.

"The older couple who owned the house next door for 45 years were wonderful," adds Carla. "She'd tell her husband, 'Joe, open the windows so we can hear the music!' There's hardly ever a weekend where we don't have people over. The big screen is a huge draw for sports and movies. The investment has really been worth it." 

Karin Melberg Schwier

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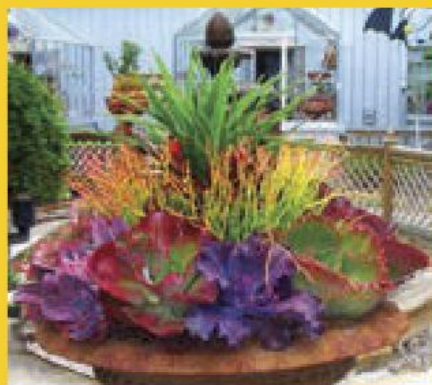
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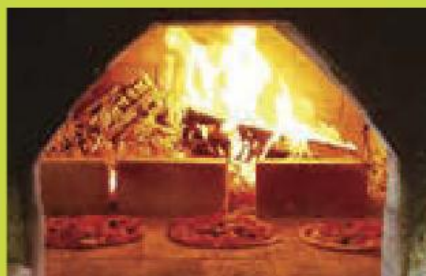
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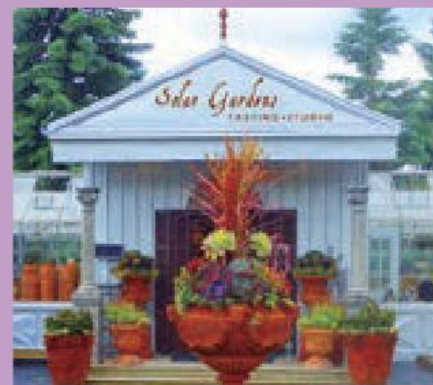


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